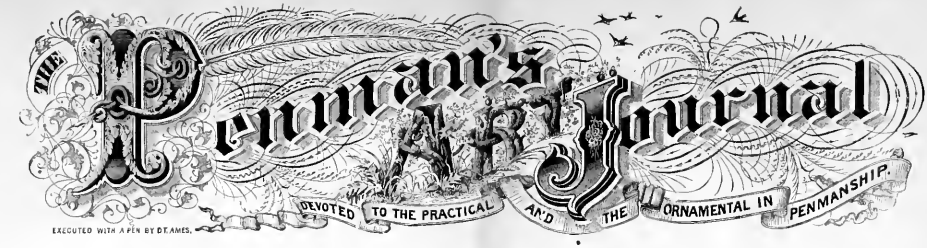


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Lessons in Practical Writing.
No. VI.
By T. W. AINS.



"It must have been a special gift" is a common observation when an unusual degree of skill is displayed in the pen. This idea is not only fallacious, but is exceedingly pernicious as regards the acquisition of good writing inasmuch as it tends to discourage pupils who write badly by leading them to believe that, not having "the gift" they are debarr'd from becoming good writers.

Good writing is no more a gift than is good reading, spelling, grammar or any other attain-

ment, and in the same way it is, and can be acquired, viz.: by patient and studious effort. Writing is just as much a subject for study and thought as any other branch of education. Study must, however, be united with practice. The correct form and construction of writing must be learned by study, while practice must give the manual dexterity for its easy and graceful execution. Many persons fail to become good writers from not properly uniting study and practice. Pencil study with too little practice will give writing comparatively good rule in its form and manner of construction, but labored, stiff and awkward in its execution, while upon the other hand much practice with little study imparts a more easy and flowing style, but with much less accuracy as regards the form of the letters and general proportion and construction of the writing, which will commonly have a loose and sprawling appearance. Example of writing which has resulted more from study than practice.

Study gives form
Example of writing in which study has resulted more practice than study.

Practice gives good
Writing, the result of study properly combined with practice.

Study combined with Practice gives grace and perfection

Undoubtedly many of our class will be forcibly illustrated in one of these examples their own experience; so manifest is the effect of these different modes of practice, that we have only to chance at a piece of writing to discern the extent to which a writer has combined study with practice while practicing to write.

We have in portions, lessons connected position, movement, unity of form, correct proportion and spacing, as the essentials to good writing. We must now direct special attention to a correct and uniform shape as another essential to good writing.

The degree of slope now adopted by the leading authors and one which we approve, is at an angle of 32° from the horizontal, as per diagram.

The relative effects of correct and incorrect slope may be seen in the following examples.

Willing
The variation in the slope of different letters and their parts will be rendered much more perceptible by drawing straight extended lines through their parts thus:

One of the most common faults in slope occurs on the last part of letters *m, n, u, h, p*, which are made thus:

m n u h p
FORMER SLOPE.
Study gives form

In practicing the present copy let special attention be given to the observation and correction of these faults.

Exercise to be practiced for movement.

per se
While we invite special attention to certain faults in connection with each lesson we, by no means, would have any one lose sight of any of those previously mentioned.

COPY FOR PRACTICE.
Grammar

Using to an unfortunate mistake by which the main stem in the following illustrations was inverted upside down, and several thousand copies of the January number printed before the mistake was discovered, we here repeat this piece of letter.

Much care should be exercised while practicing to employ the proper curve for connecting letters and their parts. It is a very common and grievous fault in writing that a straight line or a wrong curve be employed in the construction of a connection of letters, thus leaving them without distinctive character, or imparting one which is false and misleading. As for instance, a few made thus *W* is really no letter, but

may be taken for an *m* or a *u*.

anously for a *W*. In cases where the context does not determine its identity becomes a mere matter of guess, and when even this *W*'s significance, as will be seen, is so much still more vague and uncertain, as it might be intended for either of the following seven combinations:

W U M N H P
W U M N H P
With properly trained hand no more time or effort required to impart the true and unmistakable characteristics to each letter than to mothers whose identity is open to doubt and conjecture.

Ancient Writing.
That of writing is most ancient, and the second its origin lost in the distance of time. It is so far from history that it had its commencement at a very early period in some region the East, and from thence was carried into parts of the world. Many have supposed the knowledge of letters was given to man by direct revelation from God. The Bible is the earliest notice on the subject that has yet been found.

Man we are told, received the two tables of the law on Mount Sinai, written with the finger of God; and when Moses himself, not ignorant of the use of letters,

We find the first mention made of writing in Exodus 17: 14. And the Lord said unto Moses, "Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua," etc. And in Exodus 24: 1, "And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up in the morning and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel." Seventh verse: "and he took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of the people." And they said: "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." Twelfth verse: "And the Lord said unto Moses, come up to me into the Mount and be there, and I will give thee a table of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them."

Exodus 34: 1. "And the Lord said unto Moses, how the two tables of stone like unto the first, and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables which thou hast broken." Twenty-eighth verse: "And he was there on the Mount with the Lord forty days and forty nights, and he did neither eat bread nor drink water, and he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments."

The pen is first mentioned in the Bible in Job 19: 24. In Job's complaint of misery he says: "O that my words were written. O that they were printed in a book; that they were graven with an iron pen, and led in the rock forever."

Forty-fifth Psalm, last verse, David in speaking of the mercy and grace of Christ's kingdom says: "My heart is swelling a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer."

Jeremiah 17: 1. The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of their altars. There is, therefore, much reason to believe that the art of writing was understood among the Jews while other nations were yet without the heart, and upon the horns of their altars.

The Romans practiced running hand as early as the fourth century. The Greeks and Romans believed that the Phoenicians were the inventors of letters, and that the knowledge of it was brought by Cadmus from Phoenicia into Greece about 1500 B. C.

From the Phoenician, or the Hebrew, with which the latter century, the Phoenician alphabet used in Asia, writing from right to left. The principal being the Syriac, Arabic and Persian.

The original Greek was first written from right to left and then right to left and left to right consecutively. But inscriptions dated 750 B. C. were written from right to right, or in the way now practiced.

One of the earliest methods of writing was to cut out the letters on tablets of some material was to trace them on unworked clay or brick and then thoroughly join them with fine to make a hard and durable surface.

Tablets or plates of lead or brass were employed when the writing was wanted to be most durable. Tablets of wood were most common—such was used by Cadmus when he named his son Jotham. Luke 1: 63. And he asked for writing-table and ink, saying his name is Jotham. And they marvelled at him.

In some countries they carved these tables with ink and wrote on them. The instrument employed for making the letters on these tables was a small pointed piece of iron called a stylus; hence the term stylus of writing.

Leaves and the bark of trees were early used for writing. From this thin flake peeled off from the Egyptian reed Papyrus, which grew along the Nile, a material was formed which answered the purpose much better.

Leaves of linen and sometimes of cotton was another ancient material for writing. The skins of animals, also, were prepared for the purpose. About 2000 years before Christ, the art of preparing these was brought to great perfection in the city of Pergamum, where they received the name *Pergamena*, which, in English is changed to parchment, and remains still in use. For writing on such substance, a reed, formed into a pen, was used to trace the letters with ink of some sort, after



Am. Spec.



desire to hereby place on record our
appreciation of his eminent services;

AS A **PUBLIC OFFICER** AS WELL

those traits of personal character
which secured our respect for him as

A **MAN**

and endeared him to us as a

FRIEND



the following Preamble Resolutions were unanimously adopted.

WHEREAS

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LONG AND FAITHFUL SERVICE

tendered his Resignation of the position which he filled
with such distinguished ability.



while we cannot refrain
from giving expression to the

Regret

which we experience at the dissolution
of our official connection, we are grat-
ified to know that the causes which
has led to the separation has brought

TO HIM
a well earned recognition of sterling
integrity sound judgment administrative ability
WHICH SO WELL

fitted him for THE POST
among us, and which will find a wider
scope for their exercise in the

TO WHICH HE HAS NOW BEEN CALLED.
SPHERE

